

AMERICAN CITIZEN SERVICES

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

A Note from Ambassador Matthew H. Tueller



On July 4th, we will mark the 236th anniversary of our nation's independence.

Many back in the United States will mark this occasion with family, food, and fireworks,

and many of us will do the same right here in Kuwait. However even as we celebrate the occasion of our independence, it is equally important to uphold the ideals embodied in its achievement, and we can do so in no greater way than participating in the electoral process.

This November will feature elections at the local, state, and national level, where every vote cast will play an important role.

We as overseas citizens have a role to play as well, and it comes through the absentee voting process. Absentee voting is incredibly simple, and can be accomplished in three easy steps:

STEP 1:
Go to www.fvap.gov, click on your state, and fill out your Federal Post Card Application (FPCA).

STEP 2:
Send your FPCA to your local voting official, either on your own via fax,

email, or post (depending on your state), or drop it off at the Embassy for us to send for you.

STEP 3:
Once you have received it, complete your ballot and return it to your voting official.

It really is that simple a process. What's more, our Consular Section is ready to assist you with any questions you may have, at voteku-wait@state.gov, or on our website at Kuwait.usembassy.gov.

To close, our ACS newsletter is but one method we use to stay in touch with all of you.

As you go through the remainder of this newsletter, I encourage you to take note of the various ways we communicate with you—be it in an emergency or just for routine information—but also for the ways you can stay in touch with us. If you have a question, or are in need of help, don't hesitate to let us know.

Thank you, and happy Fourth of July!

Questions?

[E-mail us!](mailto:KuwaitACS@state.gov)

KuwaitACS@state.gov
VoteKuwait@state.gov

[Visit us online!](http://Kuwait.usembassy.gov)

Kuwait.usembassy.gov

Ask the Consul:

Foreign national fiancés or spouses who wish to accompany their American citizen spouse for a short-term visit to the United States will need to apply for a non-immigrant (tourist) visa. Most short-term travelers use a B1/B2 tourist visa for entry into the United States. The validity of the visa depends on the passport country of your fiancé/spouse. The first step is to

How can I take my fiancé/spouse, who is not an American citizen, with me to the United States? Does she/he need a visa?

complete the online visa application (DS-160) which can be found on our website, he/she will need to pay the fees at Burgan Bank, and then schedule an appointment online for the interview. For links to the forms, more detailed instructions and the appointment calendar, please visit:

[kuwait.usembassy.gov/](http://kuwait.usembassy.gov/passports.html)

passports.html.

Note: for visit purposes, fiancés/spouses of American citizens use the same form and visa type as any other short term visitor to the United States. Do not select K1 (fiancé visa), as this is a special class of visa for fiancés with an approved petition from the Department of Homeland Security who are planning

married in the United States and then adjust status to permanent resident and remain with their American fiancé in the United States.

Passport Renewals	2
Staying Prepared	3
Staying Prepared (cont)	4
Ins and Outs of Consular Work	5

Upcoming Post Holidays:

Eid al Fitr—Aug. 19-21
Labor Day—Sep. 2
Columbus Day—Oct. 7
Eid al Adha—Oct 28-29



PASSPORT RENEWALS:

Don't wait until the last minute

Renewing your passport in Kuwait requires a trip to the Embassy. Please don't wait until the last minute to renew your passport. It is not possible to renew by mail when you reside abroad.

When your passport has a validity of less than six months, you should be thinking about a renewal. The Embassy is very busy during the summer travel season, so apply early to avoid disappointment. Unfortunately, we cannot extend the validity of existing passports.

Did you know that passports with less than six months' validity can be rejected at foreign ports of entry for admission or at foreign embassies for the issuance of visas? You can avoid these hassles by ensuring your passport always has at least six months' validity left.

All of the information needed to renew your passport can be found on our website: kuwait.usembassy.gov/passports.html.

An appointment is necessary for all non-emergency passport processing. Please visit our website to get the forms and begin the process. There you will find information on how to book an appointment from our online calendar. Note that appointments may be in short supply in the summer months with everyone travels to avoid the heat.

All non-emergency U.S. passports are now printed in the United States. In general, you should expect to receive your new passports about 2.5 weeks after your visit to the Embassy. We will not cancel your Kuwait Residence Visa.

Our 2.5 week estimate is just that: an estimate. It is not a guarantee. Your passport issuance could be delayed. We see many applications with missing or incorrect information, especially social security numbers. In some cases the Department of State is unable to issue new passports. Recent changes in the law forbid

the issuance of a passport to parents who owe more than \$2,500 in child support. Americans with outstanding legal or criminal issues can also be subject to delay or denial.

What about emergency passports? Emergency passports can usually be issued on the same day, contact the Embassy for an emergency appointment. But emergency passports are only for serious emergencies. Returning to the United States for urgent medical cares is an emergency. A vacation to see the Taj Mahal is not. Emergency passports also have a very short validity period, sometimes just a few weeks. You will still need to apply for a full validity book either in the US or when you return to Kuwait.

Don't wait until the last minute. Avoid disappointment by applying early and making an appointment on our website ahead of the busy summer travel season.

CONSULAR TIP:

Due to recent events in the region, we advise US citizens residing in Kuwait to periodically check the Country Specific Information for neighboring countries such as Iraq and Saudi Arabia. This is particularly true if you are traveling through the land borders.

To find country specific information please visit:

www.travel.state.gov

Under travel information select the country of interest.

American Citizen Services are available Sunday through Thursday by appointment only.

To book an appointment, you can follow the easy, step by step instructions on our website, which are provided under each service

Need more information?

Visit our website:

Kuwait.usembassy.gov



VOTE!**UPCOMING
PRIMARIES**

JUNE 26
COLORADO,
NEW YORK,
(FEDERAL
PRIMARY),
OKLAHOMA,
SOUTH CARO-
LINA
(RUNOFF),
SOUTH DA-
KOTA
(RUNOFF) &
UTAH

JULY 31
GEORGIA
STATE
PRIMARY

AUGUST 2
TENNESSEE
STATE
PRIMARY

AUGUST 7
KANSAS,
MISSOURI,
MICHIGAN,
WASHINGTON
STATE PRIMA-
RIES

For more infor-
mation, please
visit
www.FVAP.gov

Staying Prepared for any Situation

WHY PREPARE?

A crisis can come in many forms. From the death of the primary wage earner to the melt down of a nuclear reactor close by. As US citizens overseas, we need to be prepared for the unexpected. Preparing yourself and your family for crisis is essential.

We have all participated in fire drills. The idea behind the drills is that in the event of a real fire, you will automatically react correctly as you had previously practiced, without thinking and trying to figure your routes involved.

Fires are not the only crisis that you may face, however. We recommend that you think of possible crisis scenarios and how you would react in such crisis. With this issue of the newsletter we

hope to give you the tools and resources to prepare yourself and your family for a crisis.

WHAT MAY HAPPEN?

We recommend that you think about the following scenarios and what you would do in each case:

- Natural disasters (floods, cyclones, extreme cold or extreme heat, earthquakes, prolonged sand storms, fires)
- Pandemics (flu and other contagious diseases)
- Technological & accidental hazards (blackouts, hazardous materials incidents and nuclear power plant accidents)
- Terrorist/War Hazards (explosions, biological threats, chemical threats, nuclear blasts, radiological



dispersion devices)

- Travel and cargo restrictions (inability of passengers and cargo to travel by air or sea).

It is impossible to plan for all situations, however, we recommend that you come up with two separate plans: evacuation and shelter in place.

EVACUATION

Evacuations are more common than many people realize. In some circumstances the US Embassy, or local authorities may advise American citizens to evacuate or households decide to evacuate to avoid situations they believe are potentially dangerous.

The amount of time you have to leave will depend on the hazard. If the event is a weather condition or worsening political strife, you might

have a day or two to get ready. However, many disasters allow no time for people to gather even the most basic necessities, which is why planning is essential.

Plan how you will assemble your family and supplies and anticipate where you will go for different situations. Choose several destinations in different directions so you have options in an emergency and know the evacuation routes to get

to those destinations.

For more information, please visit:

www.ready.gov





Taking appropriate shelter is critical in times of disaster. Sheltering is appropriate when conditions require that you seek protection in your home, place of employment or other location when disaster strikes. Sheltering outside the hazard area could include staying with friends and relatives, seeking commercial lodging or staying in a mass care facility operated by disaster relief groups.

To effectively shelter, you must first consider the hazard and then choose a place in your home or other building that is safe from that hazard. The safest locations to seek shelter vary by hazard. We recommend that you always have a basic emergency supply kit available at all times.

Water, food, and clean air are important things to have if you are sheltering in place. Each family or individual's kit should be customized to meet specific needs, such as medications and infant formula. Below are some

SHELTER IN PLACE: Basic Emergency Supply Kit

suggestions for your supply kit:

- Water, one gallon of water per person per day for one week, for drinking and sanitation.
- Food, at least a one week supply of non-perishable food.
- Battery-powered radio
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- First Aid kit
- Whistle to signal for help
- Infant formula and diapers, if you have an infant.
- Personal hygiene items including feminine supplies, moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation.
- Dust mask or cotton t-shirt, to help filter the air.
- Plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter-in-place.
- Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities.
- Can opener for food (if kit contains canned foods).
- Food for pets.

It is possible that the power will be out and you will not have air-conditioning. Rethink your clothing and bedding supplies to account for growing children and other family changes. Below are some other items for your

family to consider adding to its supply kit. Some of these items, especially those marked with a * can be dangerous, so please have an adult collect these supplies.

- Paper towels, cups, plates, and plastic utensils.
- Cash, change—ATM machines and banks may not be functional
- Fire extinguisher
- Matches in a waterproof container *
- Paper, pencil
- Disinfectant *
- Household chlorine bleach
- Medicine Dropper
- Important family documents such as copies of insurance policies, identification and bank account records in a waterproof, portable container.

**Information courtesy of
www.ready.gov**

STAY CONNECTED on your "Smart" Phone!

Last year, the Department of State released the "Smart Traveler" app for U.S. travelers going abroad. The app is compatible with iPhone, iPod touch, and iPad (requires iOS 4.0 or later). Smart Traveler provides easy access to official country information, travel alerts, travel warnings, maps, U.S. embassy locations, and more. The app also provides a link for enrollment in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) so the State Department can better assist them in an emergency.

**For more info go to:
go.usa.gov/0oj**



**Smart
Traveler
Enrollment
Program**

Info, advisories and a link back home @ **step.state.gov**

What we do and how we do it: The “Ins and Outs” of Consular Services

Doctors, dentists, accountants, and the ACS section, what do they have in common? They work by appointments.

“Unfortunately, we cannot expedite passport processing for vacations.”

All ACS services are offered on an appointment only basis. While the ACS team would love to accommodate everyone at your convenience, we simply can't. We have an online appointment system that reflects the most accurate wait times for appointments. Security, workloads, and staffing play a critical role in how many services we can offer to the public each day. Passports and other citizenship applications require a great deal of behind-the-scenes processing so they take time. Passport and the documentation of children as U.S. citizens are a priority, but providing assistance in arrest cases,

deaths, and other critical incidents are first.

“But I have an emergency!” In the event of a death in the family or serious medical emergencies that require treatment in the U.S., we stand ready to assist and will do our best to process a passport request within one business day. Unfortunately, we cannot expedite passport processing for vacations or because you didn't realize that your passport was filled.

So what should you do? Plan accordingly and always maintain at least six months or longer validity in your passport. Note the number of empty visa pages that you have available for new visas or immigration stamps in your passport. Don't forget to allow sufficient time as processing during peak seasons can take two to three weeks.

Wait, there's more—what about notarial services? Very rarely will we be able to accommodate a request for an emergency

or expedited notarial service. If you are purchasing a house, go ahead and book an online appointment just prior to the proposed closing date in the event there are documents that must be signed in front of a consular officer. If you are planning on getting married in Kuwait, book your appointment at least one month prior to the planned wedding date.

“Can't you open the Embassy for me on the weekend?”

Our work week reflects the standard work week in Kuwait, Sunday through Thursday. Opening the Embassy on a weekend requires much more than overtime for the consular staff; it requires security and other administrative personnel. We

CONSULAR TIP:

Once you've applied for your passport, you can check the status (i.e. has it been printed? has it been sent?) on our website!

Go to Kuwait.usembassy.gov/passports.html for more information.

cannot open the Embassy on the weekend to renew a passport or provide notarial services.

We appreciate your understanding and looking forward to seeing you for your next Consular service!

“So what should you do? Plan accordingly and always maintain at least six months validity on your passport.”

How to get in touch with us:

U.S. Embassy—Kuwait is in Bayan, Block 6, on Masjed Al-Aqsa Street.

You can visit us online at: Kuwait.usembassy.gov

Visit us on Facebook at: facebook.com/USEmbassyQ8

View our Twitter feed at: twitter.com/USEmbassyQ8

To view Embassy videos, check us out on YouTube at: youtube.com/USEmbassyQ8

